

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9049

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 2213

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, CH, US

SUBJECT: COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES ON THE DEATH OF PRC CHAIRMAN
MAO TSE-TUNG

REF: STATE 223128

1. PRC HANDLING OF FUNERAL OBSERVANCES IN GABORONE CONFINED TO OPENING OF CONDOLENCE BOOK, ERECTION OF ALTAR IN PRC EMBASSY COVERED WITH PAPER FLOWERS, SLOGANS AND MAO'S PICTURE, AND FREQUENT ABSENCES OF PRC OFFICIALS FROM PUBLIC AND DIPLOMATIC FUNCTIONS DURING OFFICIAL PERIOD OF MOURNING. AS FAR AS EMBASSY KNOWS, CONDOLENCE BOOK SIGNED BY ALL RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC REPS (SOVIETS HAD NOT YET ARRIVED GABORONE) AND A NUMBER OF HIGH GOB OFFICIALS TO INCLUDE PRESIDENT KHAMA AND THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

2. PRESS COVERAGE OF DEATH CONSIDERABLE AND INCLUDED FOLLOWING CONDOLENCE MESSAGE FROM KHAMA:

QTE IT IS WITH DEEP SORROW AND GRIEF THAT WE LEARN OF THE SUDDEN DEATH OF YOUR GREAT LEADER, CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG.

CHAIRMAN MAO WAS NOT ONLY A GREAT LEADER AND STATESMAN; WHILE HE LIVED HE REPRESENTED THE GREATEST HOPE FOR ALL THE DOWN-TRODDEN MASSES OF THE WORLD.

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QTE HE WAS NOT ONLY THE GREATEST REVOLUTIONARY OF OUR TIMES
BUT HE WAS ALSO A MAN OF PEACE IN A WORLD IN WHICH TYRANNY
AND INJUSTICE ARE THE ORDER OF THE DAY. HIS DEATH IS A
GREAT LOSS FOR ALL THE FREEDOM AND PEACE-LOVING PEOPLES OF
THE WORLD.

QTE OUR CONDOLENCES TO HIS GREAT NATION, TO HIS FAMILY
AND TO ALL THOSE OF HIS REMAINING COMRADES WHO WILL ASSUME
THE LEADERSHIP OF YOUR GREAT COUNTRY IN THESE TRYING TIMES.
LIKE ALL GREAT MEN CHAIRMAN MAO'S NAME AND TEACHINGS WILL
REMAIN INDELIBLE IN THE PAGES OF HISTORY, FOR WHILE HE LIES
DOWN TO REST, HIS SPIRIT WILL CONTINUE TO INSPIRE US ALL.
UNQTE

3. COMMENT: EXTREME RHETORIC OF MESSAGE SHOULD PROBABLY
BE SEEN MORE IN LIGHT OF CALCULATED DESIRE TO ESTABLISH THIRD
WORLD CREDENTIALS AT HOME AND ABROAD, THAN AS HEARTFELT
OUTPOURING OF SENTIMENT. AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, MOST GOB
OFFICIALS WHO ACCOMPANIED KHAMA ON HIS STATE VISIT TO CHINA
WERE NOT FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY WHAT THEY SAW.
ALBERTI

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